



2004 Idaho Nonresident Information

Hunting and Fishing in Idaho



Important for 2004

Chronic Wasting Disease

Idaho is CWD free! Chronic wasting disease has never been found in Idaho. Other states may have rules about transport of carcasses across their borders. Check with the states you travel through to make sure you do not violate any rules. Hunters planning on transporting deer or elk into states that prohibit import of brain/spinal cord material should make sure they do not remove external evidence of sex from the carcass, as it is required by Idaho law. Hunters can leave the evidence on a piece of meat and then remove the head, thereby transporting the skull plate/antlers without the brain material. The Idaho big game proclamation brochure states the alternatives to satisfy the evidence of sex requirement when the head has been removed.

Youth Licenses

Youngsters hunt for less in Idaho. For \$6.50, a nonresident hunter age 10-11 can get a Youth Small Game license (not valid for big game) or youngsters age 12-17 can buy a Junior Mentored license. Deer, elk, bear and turkey tags are also discounted to resident prices. The youth must be accompanied in the field by an adult with a valid Idaho hunting license. See the license application form for more information. Hunter education required.

Deer/Bear/Lion Tag

A nonresident deer tag may be used to take a black bear or mountain lion, where there is an open deer season and an open lion season.

Licenses and Tags: Where to Buy Them

All licenses, permits, general season tags and applications for controlled hunt drawings may be purchased at IDFG offices, on the Internet (www2.state.id.us/fishgame), over the telephone via credit card (1 800 554 8685 or 1 800 824 3729), or at any of the 400+ license vendors statewide. Licenses and tags for the following year go on sale each December 1. Another person may make this purchase for you. When you apply for licenses, be sure to include your name, mailing address, social security number, height, weight, date of birth and telephone number. If you take advantage of the convenience of ordering by Internet or by telephone, there is an additional processing charge for that service which will be explained at the time of purchase.

Seasons and Rules Brochures

IDFG prints brochures explaining hunting and fishing seasons and rules. If you buy licenses and/or tags over the telephone you will need to call another number, 1 800 635 7820 to order free rules brochures. You can also download these from the IDFG website. This is the fastest way to get information. Scheduled availability for brochures is as follows: wild turkey: Jan. 7; moose, goat, sheep: available now; deer, elk, antelope, black bear and mountain lion: April 15; upland game birds, rabbits, doves, furbearers, trapping, sandhill cranes: July 15; waterfowl: Sept. 15; fishing: Jan. 1, 2004. The fishing; upland game; trapping; and moose, goat, sheep brochures are two year publications.

Room to Roam

About 70 percent of the state is in public ownership, most of which is open to hunting and fishing. There are several wilderness and roadless areas in the state in which hiking, floating or horseback are the only approved methods of travel. Motorized vehicles and mountain bikes are not allowed in most of these areas. For information on recreation rules along the Middle Fork, Main or Lower Salmon River, contact the North Fork Ranger District, P.O. Box 180, North Fork, ID 83466, (208) 865 2700.

Outfitters and Guides

Idaho law does not require nonresidents to hire a guide, but licensed outfitters and guides are available to lead sightseeing, fishing and hunting trips. A number of lodges and guest ranches offer

accommodations. A list of licensed outfitters and guides may be obtained from the Outfitters and Guides Licensing Board, (OGLB) 1365 N. Orchard, Room 172, Boise, ID 83705 (208) 327 7380. IDFG cannot recommend individual guides to the public. The OGLB website at www.state.id.us/oglb/oglbhome.htm includes a search engine which will help you locate outfitters by type of activity and by area. Licensed guides are also bonded to protect you. Do not use an unlicensed outfitter or guide.

Maps

Topographical sheet maps of Idaho in 1:100,000 scale as well as the Idaho Atlas and Gazetteer, a comprehensive book containing 1:250,000 scale topographical maps of the state, lists of campgrounds, access areas and other facilities, may be purchased through IDFG. Check for a map order form on the IDFG website, or clip or copy it from one of the rules brochures. Order well in advance of your trip to be sure your order is filled in time. **The supplier of maps recently changed; prices may change after rules books are printed — check website for latest prices.**

It's the Law

Valid fishing licenses/permits are required for anyone who fishes, except residents under 14 years. Nonresidents under 14 may fish without a license if accompanied by the holder of a valid Idaho fishing license. Fish taken by the child must be included in the bag limit of the license holder. Nonresidents under 14 may buy a fishing license and be entitled to an individual bag limit.

Hunting licenses are required of all hunters. Bird and upland game hunters may purchase a license at age 10. Big game hunters can purchase a license to apply for a controlled hunt, provided they have fulfilled the hunter education requirement and do not attempt to use the license prior to turning 12. Anyone born on or after January 1, 1975 must show proof of passing an approved hunter education course. Approved courses satisfactorily completed in other states are honored in Idaho.

Idaho bowhunters are required to have passed an approved archery education course or have previously held a state approved archery permit before they can have their license validated for archery only hunts. The archery certification number must be provided, permit number of a previous archery permit, or a signed bowhunter affidavit must be provided on a signed affidavit when applying for the archery validation.

License validation is required for archery only and muzzleloader only hunts. These are not required for use of a bow or muzzleloader during an any weapon season. This, and the other required permits for hunting are best purchased at the time you get your license.

Some game birds, small game, unprotected game and some furbearers may be taken by the holder of a hunting license without other stamps or permits. A license for hunting unprotected nongame (valid from Jan. 1 through Aug. 31 only) is also available.

A WMA pheasant permit is required for hunting pheasants on certain Wildlife Management Areas where pheasant stocking programs exist. The permit is only required when hunting pheasants on Market Lake, Mud Lake, Cartier Slough, Sterling, Fort Boise, C.J. Strike, Montour, Niagara Springs and part of the Lower Payette WMAs. It is not required for hunting pheasants in other locations.

A federal waterfowl stamp and federal migratory bird harvest information program validation is required for hunting ducks and geese. The federal validation is also necessary for hunting other migratory birds managed under federal law. See the license application form for more information. The federal stamp is only required of hunters 16 and older.

There are restrictions on the types of firearms or archery equipment that can be used to hunt. Consult applicable hunting rules for specific details. With medical certification, physically impaired hunters may obtain a permit to hunt from a vehicle where use of a vehicle is legal, and for use of a crossbow in archery only hunts. You may obtain the proper forms on the IDFG website, or contact the license section at (208) 334 3717.

A person must be a resident of Idaho for six months before obtaining a resident license. A member of the armed forces or immediate

family of an armed forces member based in Idaho must live in Idaho at least 30 days to qualify for a resident license. Proof of residency as explained in the hunting or fishing seasons brochures is required!

All hunters and anglers should obtain copies of current rules (available on the IDFG website, where licenses are sold or by calling 1 800 635 7820) and become familiar with their contents.

If you requested but haven't received the necessary brochure within three weeks prior to a season opening or application period, call 1 800 635 7820.

Refund Policy

Refunds of nonresident hunting license and general season (not controlled hunt) deer or elk tag fees will be made in the event of illness or injury which disables a nonresident licensee for the entire applicable hunting season; military deployment due to armed conflict; or death of the licensee, his or her spouse, parent, son or daughter. Refund will not include the license or tag issuance fees, and will be minus a \$50 processing fee. Tags and license must be returned with proof (death certificate, obituary, written justification by a licensed medical doctor or copy of military orders). Hunting license fees will not be refunded if the license has been used to apply for a controlled hunt permit, or to purchase a mountain lion, turkey or bear tag. The request must be postmarked by Dec. 31 of the year in which the license was valid. Fees paid for credit card processing are not refunded. If a refund is requested for any other reason, only the general season deer and elk tag fees (not the license fee) may be refunded at the following sliding scale rate: Postmarked before April 1: 75%; April 1 through June 30: 50%; July 1 through Aug. 31: 25%; after Sept. 1: 0%.

Social Security Number Required

Persons who are delinquent in payment of court ordered child support are subject to immediate suspension of Idaho licenses, including hunting and/or fishing licenses. This program is authorized by the state legislature and enforced by the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare. To provide a tracking method for this program, it is now required by law to record the Social Security number of any applicant for a license. The Idaho Privacy Act protects your social security number. It is considered confidential and will not be given to any private person or organization.

HUNTING

Nonresident Tag Quotas

The number of deer and elk tags available for nonresidents is limited. In the recent past elk tags have sold out in September. Most deer tags have not sold out and have remained available over the counter. (see the section on Southeast Idaho Deer Tag, below) General season tags are available over the counter until quotas are reached.

"Second" Tags

A hunter may purchase one each of any nonresident elk or deer tags, except for nonresident metored youth tags, which remain unsold as of August 27, to be used as a second tag for that species.

Controlled Hunt Drawings

"Controlled hunts" have drawings for a limited number of permits. Applicants must have a valid hunting license, or purchase one while applying for the drawing.

Nonresidents are now eligible for moose permits. A permit/tag fee of \$1,514.50 must be submitted when applying for controlled hunt drawings for moose, mountain goat or bighorn sheep. For other species, tag fees are not submitted but there is a \$6.50 non refundable application fee (if you take advantage of the convenience of ordering by Internet or by telephone and credit card, there is an additional processing charge for that service). Notification of successful applicants is explained in the applicable season brochure. Hunt numbers and area descriptions change from year to year, so be sure to use only the season brochure for the current year when applying. Some of the permits in deer and elk controlled hunts are allocated to outfitters. Ask your outfitter about these.

Deer, elk and antelope controlled hunt permits and tags must be purchased by August 20. Any of these permits not purchased by that date will be sold as "unclaimed". Details to follow soon.

You may complete controlled hunt applications at IDFG offices or license vendors statewide during the appropriate application period. You may also complete applications on the IDFG website, www2.state.id.us/

fishgame or over the telephone at 1 800 554 8685 and pay for them with Visa or MasterCard cards. Mail in applications must be completed on the controlled hunt worksheet or a photocopy from the applicable season brochure or from the IDFG website. It is also handy to fill out when preparing to apply over the phone.

The controlled hunt application period for wild turkey and spring black bear hunts is January 15 February 15; moose, bighorn sheep or mountain goat April 1 30. Applicants for moose, bighorn sheep and mountain goat permits may not apply for most other "controlled hunts". Check the rules. Controlled hunt applications for deer, elk, antelope and fall black bear hunts are accepted from May 1 through 31. Applications for sandhill crane hunts will be accepted June 15 – July 15. Rules and information on cranes appear in the upland game seasons brochure and a separate brochure printed in June.

Idaho Elk Hunting

Idaho has some of the best elk hunting in the world. Over the past several years, success rates in controlled hunts and general seasons combined have held steady at 18-20 percent. The average since 1982 has been 23 percent success. Of the bulls taken in 2002, 28 percent were six points (per side) or better. Concerns about hunter pressure on the numbers of mature bulls in some management units led the Fish and Game Commission to institute a zone and A B tag system for elk hunting in 1998. The objective is to protect populations where they need help without shifting large amounts of hunting pressure to other vulnerable areas, but still maintain hunter opportunity statewide. The state has been divided into 29 elk zones, and hunters may buy a tag good only in one zone. Each zone (with a few exceptions) will have two types of tags to choose from. "A tags" have lots of hunts for archery and muzzleloader, less for centerfire. "B tags" are the opposite. If archery, muzzleloader and "any weapon" hunts are offered in your zone and for your tag type, you may hunt in any or all of them. Exchange of tags for a different type or zone will be allowed until August 29, or the beginning of your tag's season, whichever is first. There is a \$3.50 fee for exchanges.

The Lolo, Selway, Dworshak, Elk City and Middle Fork zones will have a limited number of B Tags in 2004. In the Middle Fork Zone, A tags will also be limited. Final season dates for deer, elk, antelope, black bear and mountain lion will be set in early March.

Panhandle Elk Tag Changes

The separate quota on Panhandle elk tags has been eliminated. That number of tags has been added to the larger "any zone" category available to nonresidents.

Deer

Deer are found throughout Idaho. Over the past several years, deer hunter success has held at about 31 percent, but the average since 1982 is 40 percent. With the adoption of the A B zone tags for elk beginning in 1998, there is more overlap of elk and deer seasons, and more opportunity to hunt both on the same trip.

Whitetails are found primarily north of the Salmon River, and are generally hunted later in the fall than mule deer. Whitetail seasons commonly open in mid October or early November and close mid to late November. In 2002, 62 percent of bucks harvested had four or more antler points per side; 23 percent were five point or larger.

Mule deer are more numerous, and found mostly in the southern two thirds of the state. The drought of the late 1980s and early 1990s, coupled with harsh winters and deteriorating habitat conditions, caused a reduction in some mule deer herds. Most herds have made a strong comeback and are in good shape now, with good numbers of mature bucks. Recent aerial surveys showed a steady increase in numbers of mature bucks in most areas. Thirty two percent of mule deer bucks taken in Idaho in 2002 were 4 point or larger.

Most general mule deer seasons are during October. In most units a hunter is allowed to kill any buck, but in units 40, 41 and 42 in extreme southwestern Idaho, and unit 56 in southeast Idaho, general season harvest is restricted to two point or smaller deer, that is, having two or fewer antler points per side (2X3 is legal). Units 70 and 73 in southeast Idaho are restricted to two point only bucks for most of the season with a few days of hunting for any buck. This rule is to reduce hunting pressure and harvest, allowing more bucks to mature. Under this regulation for the past few years, the number of older bucks with larger antlers has

increased. Bucks larger than two point can be hunted in these units if you draw the appropriate controlled hunt permit.

The Clearwater Region deer tag was added in 1998 and is required to hunt in Units 8, 8A, 10, 10A, 11, 11A, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 16A, 17, 18, 19 and 20, and is necessary to hunt either whitetails or mule deer. This is not an extra tag. The Clearwater tag will be valid only in those units. Like other nonresident deer tags, it can be used to take a bear or lion.

Some extra tags are offered in controlled hunts, allowing the hunter to take a second deer. These hunts are designated by an "X" following the controlled hunt area in the brochure.

Southeast Deer Tag Changes

The Southeast Region nonresident deer season will be a limited entry hunt with 1,200 tags available. Applicants must have a valid Idaho hunting license for the same year as the application, or submit the license fee at the time of application. Tag fee of \$235 and application fee of \$6.50 must also be submitted with the application. The application period is Dec. 1, 2003 through Jan. 31, 2004. Unsuccessful applicants will receive a refund of license and tag fees, but not the application fee.

Applications for the Southeast deer tag can be printed from the Fish and Game web page at www2.state.id.us/fishgame. Look under "Hunting" then "Nonresident Info." They are also available from Fish and Game offices. When filled in, mail them to Fish and Game Licenses, P.O. Box 25, Boise, ID 83707. Applications must be postmarked by January 31.

Nonresident applicants for the Unit 75,77 and 78 muzzleloader controlled deer hunt, hunt number 1082 in 2003, will no longer be required to have a deer tag in possession in order to apply.

General deer seasons are open in the remainder of the state to nonresidents who buy a regular deer tag.

Deer/Bear/Lion Tag

The 2000 Legislature enacted a law allowing a nonresident deer tag to be used to take a black bear or mountain lion instead of a deer, where there is an open deer season and the season is also open for the species harvested.

Bears & Mountain Lions

Black bears may be hunted over bait in some areas. A baiting permit is required. Hounds may be used to hunt bears or lions, also with a permit required. A limited number of nonresident hound hunter permits is issued each year. It is required for anyone who owns hounds, controls hounds in the field, or takes a bear or lion with the use of hounds. Clients of outfitters who hold valid permits do not need a separate permit. Nonresidents who want these permits should apply to the Licenses Section at Fish and Game headquarters by Dec. 1; notification takes place in December.

A hunter will be allowed to harvest more than one black bear and mountain lion in some units; and will be able to buy bear and lion tags at a reduced price for use in designated units. Check the rules brochure.

Antelope

Antelope range across much of southern Idaho and can be hunted either in the general archery season or in any-weapon controlled hunts. There is no general season rifle hunt. The archery season runs from mid August to mid September. Most controlled antelope hunts run from late September to late October. In most areas upland bird seasons are open at the same time as the controlled hunts, allowing dual purpose hunts. In 2003 there were 1,520 controlled hunt permits.

Upland Game & Waterfowl

Quail seasons start in mid Sept. and usually end Dec. 31. Chukar and gray partridge seasons start when quail does, and end mid January. The forest grouse season opens Sept. 1 and runs to Dec. 31. Sage and sharp tailed grouse seasons open between mid Sept. and Oct. 1. Sage grouse seasons vary from one to three weeks depending on area; sharp tailed grouse, two to four weeks. Sharptails have been proposed for listing as an endangered species, as have sage grouse. A \$1.50 validation on your license for sage and sharptail grouse will help biologists track hunter numbers and harvest. The hunting season for pheasants runs for seven to eleven weeks, depending on area, beginning in mid October. The upland game seasons brochure contains general distribution and use information. The nonresident small game

hunting license (\$73.50, good for upland and migratory birds, turkey and cottontail rabbits) is not valid for pheasant during the first five days of the season. Nonresidents who want to hunt pheasants during the first five days of the season must have a nonresident hunting license (\$128.50) or combination license (\$181.50).

Waterfowl hunting in northern and eastern Idaho is at its peak during October and November. South central and southwestern Idaho hunting generally is best during late November, December and early January. Nontoxic shot is required for hunting waterfowl throughout Idaho.

Mourning doves are hunted in September, and hunting success is best during the first part of the season. Nontoxic shot is not required for hunting mourning doves in Idaho. Rules for doves are included in the upland game brochure. Rules and information on sandhill cranes appear in the upland game seasons brochure and a separate brochure printed in June. Sportsman that hunt mourning doves, sandhill cranes, or waterfowl must purchase the \$1.50 validation for the federal migratory game bird harvest information program.

Fishing

Idaho is famous for its fishing. More than 10 world class blue ribbon wild trout streams, including the Henrys Fork, Silver Creek and the St. Joe River, are scattered throughout the state. Many other high quality trout streams exist that don't get the headlines and the crowds. Idaho's rugged mountains contain more than 1,500 high mountain lakes with good trout fishing for backpackers, llama packers and horseback riders. Numerous large natural lakes and reservoirs provide a wide variety of fishing opportunities for warm and cold water species. In contrast to some states, most Idaho fishing waters are located in the public domain, and are open to the public. Access is free.

The general stream fishing season in Idaho opens the Saturday before Memorial Day and runs through November. Most lakes, reservoirs, large rivers and some streams are open to fishing year round. With the purchase of a two pole permit, an angler may use two poles in some locations. Check the rules brochure. General fishing information, current conditions, regional fishing reports, and fishing destinations can be found on the fisheries menu of the Idaho Department of Fish and Game web site (<http://www2.state.id.us/fishgame>).

Family Fishing Waters

In response to anglers' requests for more family oriented fishing opportunities and simplified rules, Fish and Game has developed Family Fishing Water regulations. In these areas there are year around seasons, a general six fish limit for trout, bass, walleye and pike and no bag limit on other species. There are no length limits or tackle requirements.

Resident Trout Waters

Anglers flock to Idaho from throughout the world to pursue large rainbow trout on the Henrys Fork and big rainbows and browns on Silver Creek, a favorite haunt of Ernest Hemingway. In the South Fork of the Snake River, near Idaho Falls, anglers can catch premium Yellowstone cutthroat trout, lunker browns and an occasional rainbow in a secluded incised canyon. Near Boise, the South Fork of the Boise River produces a bevy of wild rainbow trout. The Big Wood River, near Ketchum Sun Valley, also is a premium rainbow trout fishery. Special regulations in all of the above streams ensure that these streams will continue to produce large, high quality fish. Regulations call for single barbless hooks.

A number of Idaho rivers contain robust populations of Westslope cutthroat trout, a native species, including the St. Joe River near St. Maries, Kelly Creek in the northcentral Idaho wilderness, and the Lochsa River along U.S. Highway 12, near the route of Lewis and Clark. Whitewater boaters can enjoy a two pronged experience on the 50 mile Selway River and the 100 mile Middle Fork of the Salmon River by fishing for native cutthroat while steering through many whitewater Class 2-4 rapids. Trout fishing on the Selway and the Middle Fork is catch and release only, ensuring that the resource will endure for generations to come.

Below Hells Canyon Dam, the wild and scenic section of the Snake River along the Idaho Oregon border produces a startling variety of game fish, including large numbers of smallmouth bass, rainbow trout, catfish and white sturgeon (catch and release only).

Beyond all of these possibilities, Idaho Fish and Game stocks 108 creeks and rivers in Idaho to provide a spate of catchable rainbow trout

in the 6 to 12 inch range. These waters are tailored especially to young anglers and families.

Salmon & Steelhead

Due to a variety of positive factors, Idaho has been blessed with a number of very high chinook salmon and steelhead runs in 2001, 2002 and 2003, allowing the Idaho Fish and Game Commission to set the most liberal catch and possession limits in the last quarter-century. In the 2001 season on hatchery chinook, for example, anglers could catch up to 4 fish a day or 40 for the season on the Salmon River, the Little Salmon River, the Clearwater River and the Snake River in Hells Canyon. The 2001 steelhead run, which occurred in the fall of 2001 and the spring of 2002, broke all records in terms of the number of steelhead passing Lower Granite Dam, the last fish-counting station on the Snake River. Because of the projected strong returns, steelhead limits have been raised statewide to three per day, nine in possession and 20 for the season.

The opportunity to pursue steelhead and chinook in Idaho has been especially popular with Montana, eastern Washington, eastern Oregon, Utah, Nevada and Wyoming anglers because they can enjoy an Alaska-level fishing experience close to home. If you plan on fishing for salmon or steelhead in Idaho, be aware that a special permit is required in addition to a fishing license.

Future migration and ocean conditions will determine whether these kinds of large runs will continue. Anglers should check fish reports on the IDFG web site or call ahead to check on the fishing prospects for salmon and steelhead because they can be highly variable.

Lakes and Reservoirs

A number of large lakes and reservoirs offer high quality fishing including Henrys Lake (cutthroat hybrids exceeding 20 inches in length) and brook trout, Lake Pend Oreille near Sandpoint (big rainbows and lake trout), Coeur d'Alene Lake (northern pike, chinook and kokanee), Payette Lake near McCall (trophy lake trout), Cascade Reservoir

(rainbows) and Brownlee Reservoir (smallmouth bass, crappie and channel catfish). Remote and expansive, Brownlee runs for 50 miles along the Oregon Idaho border. Because of the diversity and quantity of fish available, it is the state's most popular fishery.

Idaho has an abundance of lakes and reservoirs with hatchery stocked trout fisheries distributed throughout the state. Salmon Falls Creek Reservoir near Twin Falls offers a rare opportunity to fish for walleye in Idaho. Consult the IDFG website to check on regional fishing reports and recent stocking information to ensure that you time your visit to Idaho when the fishing is hot.

As mentioned above, Idaho's mountain lakes can offer surprisingly good fishing in the hot summer months (July September) and consistently splendid scenery. Fishing pressure is light because most lakes are accessible only to hikers, llama packers and horseback riders. Some lakes have no established trail access. In some cases, particularly in the 2.4 million acre Frank Church Wilderness and the 1.2 million acre Selway Bitterroot Wilderness, backcountry airstrips provide an option for backpackers who wish to fly into the center of the wilderness for a multi day backcountry fishing outing. Flights normally cost about \$75 to \$100 per person.

Sturgeon

In freeflowing sections of the Snake River in southcentral and southwest Idaho, including Hells Canyon, and on the Lower Salmon River, anglers can take advantage of the rare experience of fishing for white sturgeon. These fish can grow to lengths exceeding 6 8 feet and weigh over 100 pounds. Hence, heavy tackle is required. It may take an angler a half hour or more to land one. All sturgeon fishing is catch and release.

Bull Trout

Bull trout are protected under state law and the federal Endangered Species Act. No harvest is allowed. Any bull trout caught while fishing for other species must be released unharmed.



Idaho Department of Fish and Game
P.O. Box 25
Boise, ID 83707-0025
Phone: (208) 334-3700 / 1-800-635-7820
www2.state.id.us/fishgame
email: idfginfo@idfg.state.id.us
Credit Card License Purchases
1-800-554-8685

IDFG Regional Offices

Panhandle (208) 769-1414
Clearwater (208) 799-5010
Southwest (208) 465-8465
McCall (208) 634-8137
Magic Valley (208) 324-4350
Southeast (208) 232-4703
Upper Snake (208) 525-7290
Salmon (208) 756-2271

Idaho Relay (TDD) Service 1-800-377-3529